

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knock - Ce Cnoc** Ref: **78**  
County: **Clare** Mark: **326**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	46
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	44
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	48	50
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	27	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>326</b>

### Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....

Welcome to the 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your completed application form which included photos, a map and a list of projects which you hope to undertake in the next 3-5 years. We recommend putting a date after each of these projects to focus the work of the committee and volunteers. You are a committee of 7 and with 5 volunteers, all of whom you list by name, and together you have undertaken the projects/activities listed in the application form. You are helped financially or with advice/assistance by state and semi-state bodies or organisations in addition to businesses, individuals, and community groups. You communicate with each other almost on a daily basis and hope to launch a Facebook page and Instagram account this year. We are delighted to see this and you'll be surprised at the amount of interest a Facebook Page and Instagram account generates. Ask a teenager to take charge of these social media accounts and let it be his/her contribution to the TidyTowns committee. You have been involved in the SuperValu TidyTowns competition since 2004 which has resulted in the community developing a of great sense of togetherness and a pride of what you have around you – its beauty and heritage. This is the true spirit of Tidy Towns.

Please see Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the Application Form and producing the map.

### Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Your small village is quite unique having a quay and a man-made pier as two focal points in the streetscape. Add to these the single and two storey vernacular buildings at the road junction and the beautiful single arch stone bridge to see the architectural merits of the village. The refurbishment of the quay is an on-going project – best of luck with this. Rather than building a small stone wall at the quay to 'house' the painted flagstone we recommend that it is inserted into the existing stone wall similar to the one already inserted. The mural on the Fisherman's Hut is excellent – a lovely depiction of the village. You have some flat iron gates along the entrance roads to the village which are quite beautiful, some need to be painted. We love the blue and white benches along the pier. The bench made from unwrought timbers is quite beautiful. There is a bit of a mix styles of benches, picnic benches etc along the quay – hopefully in the redesign you will address this and have some uniformity (at least in colour) which would be more aesthetically pleasing. The black and gold railing along the quay is very nice – simple and effective. We admired the seating area of the local coffee shop.

### Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your small village is quite unique having a quay and a man-made pier as two focal points in the streetscape. Add to these the single and two storey vernacular buildings at the road junction and the beautiful single arch stone bridge

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### **Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:**

Hedgerows, stone walls, trees, long grasses, your river and your long coastline are all great habitats for insects and small mammals and the hedgerows and long grasses wonderful areas for wild flora. You mention a ride on mower and hopefully this is a mulching mower as the fine bits of grass decompose quickly, releasing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and micronutrients back into the soil. This means fewer fertilizer treatments are needed for your grass areas. We are delighted to see that you are using the FIT count and please let us know about the changes in your local biodiversity, if any, next year. We read the school makes regular visits to the village for nature walks and talks, including a talk from Galway Atlantaquaria on all the various life on the shoreline. We see that some of the committee’s children are very involved in your work – we commend them for being involved in activities which benefit the whole community. The small bug hotels were spotted – don’t forget you must clean these to get rid of any residue, debris, and old loose, dry materials to prevent fungus and mites from spreading.

### **Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:**

This is a category where many communities struggle but it is just about being aware of how we use the resources of the and tackle the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. You grow 90% of your plants and shrubs from either cuttings or harvested seeds – this is commendable. You intend to use old wood from benches and construct a book bank and also some planters. Some of your window boxes have been used for the past 15 years – if it’s good and well cared for it’ll last! Fertiliser is made using nettles and seaweed. We looked for rainwater harvesters but didn’t see any – perhaps they’re located at the rear of some houses. Have any of the local residents installed solar panels? This is something you could advise on – find out about grants etc and let the community know what’s available. During Covid quite a number of state and semi-state organisation organised Webinars and many were on subjects which relate to this category. Did you take part in any? Some are still available on-line. We suggest that you contact your environmental officer and he/she will assist you. We had a peep inside your polytunnel – very good.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

The An Taisce Annual Clean-Up in April is an excellent way to get communities involved in litter pick-up as it focuses the attention on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. This event is now well known and is a great way of involving the volunteers in the work of a committee. We recommend that you register next year and invite the local residents to become involved. When we visited the village was virtually litter free so we commend you, your CE worker and your volunteers for the work you do. We did however notice weed growth at kerbs and particularly along gravel areas. We suggest that the litter pick up volunteers also become weed removal volunteers and ask them to bring a hoe/spade and wire brush and to also remove weed growth. The gravel areas can be sprayed with organic weed killer or a mix of vinegar, salt and washing up liquid. We see that you also do a twice-yearly clean-up of the beach/coast to collect heavier items that are washed ashore. As you have no council street cleaning or garbage collection you must bring the litter etc collected to a depot. In Spring, your “Powerwasher Day” results in moss and buildup, which accumulated during the winter on your footpaths, being removed. In addition, all the loose gravel from roads and footpaths is removed using a leaf blower.

### **Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:**

Single and two storey vernacular houses are in the main your village housing and also that along the surrounding approach roads. Many of these were freshly painted or cleaned and presented well. Some of these are quite large and are in sites surrounded by neatly tended gardens with flowers, shrubs and in some instances trees. The simple sign of Oaklands set into the wall is perfect. Cut back the ivy from the planting bed overhead so that it does not grow and hide the sign. Houses here are neatly tended with trimmed hedges as boundary treatments and well-kept gardens behind. The small flower planter opposite the entrance to this estate is superfluous as the shrubs and trees here give a natural beauty to the roadway. Don’t allow ivy to grow on this low stone boundary wall. Don’t forget to encourage the residents to grow pollinator-friendly flowers. Have a look at the website [http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Gardens\\_actions-to-help-pollinators-July-2016.pdf](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Gardens_actions-to-help-pollinators-July-2016.pdf) for ideas for the garden.

### **Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:**

Entering from the west we have a wonderful view of the pier, quay and Shannon Estuary. The Fáilte sign was noticed and we suggest that if the letters were painted white it would be even more noticeable. We liked that a narrow strip of grass had been cut along the entrance roads (at Oaklands and the side road). This roadside frontage is a great example of how to effectively present a semi-wild habitat with its narrow strip of tidily mown grass along the outer edge to show that the wilderness behind is deliberate. Road surfaces on the main road (R486) were fairly good but those on the side road were ravelling, had edge break-up and potholes. The stop road marking on this side

road in the centre of the village is quite worn and needs to be repainted. Grass is easier to maintain than gravel (which attracts weed growth) and so we advise that if there are gravel areas which you find difficult to maintain consider sowing grass seed which you can then cut weekly or as you see fit. We noticed the box hedge 'KNOCK' but we wonder how many others do as the location is somewhat lost – perhaps it should be on a slight slope.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This was our first time visiting your village and we thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Keep up the good work and we hope that this report provides some guidance for your programme next year. Below are some recommendations - While you identify the projects as new (N) and maintained (M) you fail to number them. You need to number them as N1, N2, N3 etc and M1, M2, M3 etc. These numbers should then be transferred to your map so that the adjudicator can find them. Please also include a legend of the project on the map.

You have listed some projects as New whereas they are Future Projects. Please include all Future Projects in your 3-5 year Plan and only projects completed in the past 12 months should be included as New.

While we appreciate that your village is small this is no reason why your map should be small – it measured approximately 100mm x 75mm when it was printed on A4 paper. Make the map fill an A4 page and this will make it easier for you to locate your projects.

The above is not a criticism of your work – but purely to encourage you to improve your application so as to reap the rewards.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2023 competition.